

# Globalisation and Changing Practices for Academic Librarians in Australia: A Literature Review

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*ABSTRACT* The purpose of this study is to review and analyse historical research related to changes brought on by globalisation in Australian academic libraries. Using relevant literature, this study examines the role of academic librarians in internationalising their own experiences and perspectives for the purpose of improving library, instructional and service activities. In some cases, this has in turn led to increased participation by librarians in institutional leadership such as planning and implementing international education in their own institutions, as well as increased participation in international organisations and partnerships. This article is part one of a larger study; part two will examine results from a survey of current practice.

In the age of the internet, the knowledge society is linked with globalisation and provides the framework for the modern university. Yet there has been little research on how globalisation affects librarians' roles in institutional internationalisation efforts. Are librarians' activities important only in library terms, or do they have impact on other parts of the university? Clark has said that academic groups have to see themselves in common situations, with common problems and enemies, and in need of common actions in order to build a common culture.<sup>1</sup> Where do librarians fit into that institutional model?

While some have written of the need for librarians to be proactive in institutional policy forums, there is little follow up on how this occurs in the universities.<sup>2</sup> This study of the literature is an attempt to understand the place of librarians within the wider institutional context.

International education for librarians has to be placed in a broad context. Librarians have always worked in an atmosphere saturated with internationalism. While Australia is part of the Anglo-Saxon West, and much of its history and ethos is Eurocentric, ideas and the books they come in have always been international. In a small nation, the amount of scholarly publishing is not copious; and overall, Australia has necessarily been an importer of knowledge.<sup>3</sup> In no way could Australian publications meet the full educational needs of higher education. Therefore, for years the majority of academic library collections consisted of materials published outside the country. That has continued with the recent proliferation of international electronic databases to which Australian university libraries need to subscribe to remain competitive. They have had to develop new collaborative methods for funding expensive subscriptions.<sup>4</sup> With the advent of government mandated international education, new technologies, massification, and the influx of

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international students, many from Asia and the Pacific, librarians have had to rethink everything from collection development to models of service responsive to diverse populations.<sup>5</sup>

Added to the mix were two other factors: that immigration patterns in the late twentieth century were changing the face of Australia, while it was becoming increasingly clear that indigenous groups such as Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders would also need to be included in higher education.<sup>6</sup> During this period of high growth in the multicultural needs of diverse incoming groups,<sup>7</sup> the government cut spending for higher education even while it amalgamated the university system.<sup>8</sup> In light of the diminishing support, how would librarians cope in this increasingly diverse environment? What were the strategies devised by librarians to increase their knowledge of cultures and their ability to work successfully with divergent learning styles? In short, how would librarians become globally competent citizens in the modern academic library? Whatever steps they took to internationalise their own perspectives and activities would now have to be carried out while trying to adapt to new colleagues, new settings and new institutions brought on by unifying all tertiary institutions into one university system.

## **Academic Libraries and Librarians**

Libraries are large, sprawling organisations that have complicated interrelated parts; they should be understood in the same structural terms applied to all modern organisations in higher education.<sup>9</sup> While each university library is divided into public and technical services answering to an administrative hierarchy, this has to be set in the Australian context of amalgamated campuses where main libraries and multiple branch libraries are geographically widespread. For example, some branch libraries are comprehensive and exist to serve the broadest possible educational needs; other branches have special collections that are meant to serve a discrete population. Staff members, particularly during the hectic time of the mergers, were often divided by having differently understood histories, cultures and missions; organisational change in such an atmosphere had to be carefully planned.<sup>10</sup>

Libraries are, by their very nature, complex organisations where work done in one department may be little understood by librarians in other departments. For example, set the complexity of the university library into the wider institutional context and one begins to see that change for librarians is varied and bound by both institutional and individual preferences. The roles that librarians play in internationalising their own practices, experiences and beliefs may be institutionally or personally driven. Leadership for change may come from a variety of internal and external forces such as the government, the vice chancellors, professional organisations or the library administration, which itself is under pressure to change.<sup>11</sup> For some individual librarians, being globally competent citizens is understood as an important thing, enabling them

better to carry out their professional service, particularly in regard to changing populations of students.<sup>12</sup> However varied the forces driving change, the traditional roles of librarians are shifting from the parochial to the global.

## **Librarians and Changing Roles**

For librarians, the definitions of international education encompass all of the meanings understood by academics and include additional outcomes that revolve around solutions that support library service. Up until the 1980s, the work of most librarians not employed in library administration was localised in one department, and so internationalisation was seen in terms that were work related. For many librarians, international education was defined in terms of providing the right information to a predominantly white, Australian population, and the methods of work varied little from previous ages until the population of users began to change.<sup>13</sup>

Library administrators were always the primary interface of the library outside the library portals. They ensured that the library served the public properly and kept to budget.<sup>14</sup> The need to broaden administrative practices to meet new, external responsibilities was not fully understood until higher education itself underwent dramatic change.<sup>15</sup> For all librarians, the methods and services offered before 1985 were based on a tried-and-true model that had changed little as long as the population remained the same.

Under the pressures of globalisation and internationalisation, the activities of librarians have expanded considerably and thus definitions of library work and international education have enlarged from old understandings. In the 1992 Boyer Lecture, Geoffrey Bolton stated that four million people from 100 countries had migrated to Australia since World War II.<sup>16</sup> Considering that Australia's population is now over 20 million, this growth is a substantial addition to the formerly white, European makeup of the country. Since the 1960s the populations served by higher education have grown increasingly diverse. The push toward massification<sup>17</sup> meant that multicultural populations of students from non-English language immigrant families were entering tertiary education in large numbers.<sup>18</sup> Although their numbers were smaller, the needs of Indigenous students entering higher education presented other unique challenges to the system.<sup>19</sup> At the same time the population of international students was growing rapidly. The needs of these students were vastly different from the elite students who had formerly constituted library patrons needing to be served.

New demands from these diverse populations have affected library work in numerous ways. The responses are partially based upon and induced by the wider institutional changes driven by globalisation. In other cases, library responses are a result of a growing awareness that new populations, brought to campus by the push for international education, must be given new forms of

library instruction. When the major increases in foreign students began to enter Australian universities in the late 1980s McCullagh and O'Connor commented:

Although overseas students represent a significant percentage of students enrolled in higher education, there has been very little written about their library needs in the Australian literature... Librarians need to cultivate a knowledge of and interest in foreign students and their cultures.<sup>20</sup>

As a result much of the current literature into the change process looks at outcomes for students. A dissertation by McSwiney deals with social and cultural change and these have an impact on diverse library users.<sup>21</sup>

Globalisation and internationalisation have contributed to the need for a different type of librarian, one who is capable of working and thinking in new ways that encompass cultural sensitivity. Librarians need new perspectives and skills training in order to be effective within a changing and increasingly international context.<sup>22</sup> How then have librarians responded to these changes?

### **Librarians as Change Agents**

The literature demonstrates that in academic libraries responses to global and international change have been driven in ways similar to other parts of the university. Although some of the literature brings up the complaint that librarians are traditionally passive and slow to make changes,<sup>23</sup> others write of the transformations taking place in the libraries of higher education. Just as other professions and disciplines have seen an expansion of professional organisations and collaborative efforts, Australian librarians have joined with their colleagues to work on common problems. The Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA), while not a new organisation, has become an important factor in facing global demands and presenting new policy ideas for meaningful change for all libraries in Australia.<sup>24</sup> In addition, the Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL) has, for the last decade, been an important force in forming the professional role of university librarians.

Formed in 1928, CAUL saw many changes over the years.<sup>25</sup> During the late 1980s CAUL's membership of university librarians (directors) was transformed by the merging of institutions. With the formation of a one-tier system of universities, librarians needed new forms of collective leadership to support professional development and to work within the new system. The organisation quickly took an important leadership role in dealing with the new challenges. By 1998 the Executive Committee of CAUL included internationalisation in its strategic plan.<sup>26</sup>

Librarians in Australia found that shared strategic planning was necessary if they were to sustain and further the demands of the changing library scene. CAUL's *Strategic Plan & Action for 2001* states: 'By cooperating and collaborating with other national and international organisations CAUL will

promote policies and influence practices that will benefit the Australian and the international scholarly community'.<sup>27</sup>

Through the auspices of CAUL, library leadership has been successful in working with the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee and various Commonwealth agencies to form new infrastructure and entrepreneurial partnerships.<sup>28</sup> By taking on a more corporate way of working, librarians have been able to build international collaborative efforts for library infrastructure and tap into competitive funding for equipment, teaching and learning projects, facilities, and quality assurance projects.<sup>29</sup>

The institutional response is mirrored by the individual response. As one would expect, library leadership on the campus level has had to work in an ever-changing environment set against the backdrop of mergers and amalgamations, spread-out library branches, the need for new technologies, competition for decreasing budgets, and over-stretched, understaffed libraries.<sup>30</sup> Just as other department heads have had to respond to organisational change and become more managerial under restructuring, university librarians have been pushed in the same directions. Burrow states: 'The university librarians will be treated as the chief executive, responsible for the efficient management of the library service, and will be left to make his or her own arrangements for consulting users on specific matters of policy'.<sup>31</sup>

Library literature indicates that globalisation has driven many changes from the top. The growth of managerial leadership is one response. Yet another response takes place on the institutional level. Libraries share a special position in the life of the campus: they are central to the educational mission, but they are not moneymakers. When federal and state governments adjure universities to be entrepreneurial and find new sources of funding to further operations,<sup>32</sup> free libraries, with their voracious need for funding, might seem to be a mismatch for this new mission. Nevertheless, Australian librarians have become part of the institutional response to globalisation by cooperating with university efforts to make their campuses more attractive to outsiders by initiating accepted corporate models such as Total Quality Management (TQM). By the mid 1990s, just as other departments adopted quality assurance, so too had university librarians instituted performance measurements to evaluate and improve service.<sup>33</sup>

## **Quality Assurance and Librarians**

According to Pitman, Trahn and Wilson Australia is the only nation where librarians are expected to carry out quality assurance using international standards linked with overseas partners and where support and funding are available for the task.<sup>34</sup> Driven from the top, library administrators, working together through CAUL and other international organisations, have established collaborative programs and have pushed their staff to establish benchmarking practices.

The first steps in international partnering have been taken through membership and participation in activities promoted by the Association of Commonwealth Universities Commonwealth Higher Education Management Service (CHEMS) Benchmarking Club and the Universitas 21 global alliance. International benchmarking presented particular challenges and the experience of Australian partners in this arena is probably fairly described as substantial but pioneering.<sup>35</sup>

While quality assurance programs have been promulgated by the government, the university and library leadership, the adoption of performance measurements has little to do with global response for working librarians. One can surmise that for many library administrators the reasons for instituting quality assurance are quite pragmatic.<sup>36</sup> The use of quality assurance shows them as 'team players' to the government and the university. This allows them to apply for government grants. It forces staff members to be responsive to managerial change, to participate in new initiatives for staff development and training and improve services in all departments.

Library quality assurance is market driven; it is a response to government demands for globalisation and the institutional need to be competitive in the widest sense.<sup>37</sup> However, the choice of what gets benchmarked and assessed in library operations is based upon the educational impulse of librarians to improve services. So, although the impetus for performing quality assurance measures is a form of economic globalisation, the resulting findings may well be the spur to providing improved library services. The fact that the university library has undertaken quality assurance will in turn be used by the university to demonstrate to both internal domestic and external international markets that it is a competitive player worthy of attracting foreign students, scholars and institutional partnerships.

It is quite likely that library administrators understand all of the external dimensions of quality assurance, while librarians at other levels may not. Those librarians charged with carrying out quality assurance in their departments may well see this as an onerous and irritating duty. It may also appear as one more instance when librarians are asked to prove that they are doing a good job. And thus the chore becomes psychologically tied more to protecting one's turf and one's salary than to improving service or meeting the challenges caused by globalisation and internationalisation. D'Avigdor puts it this way:

If performance measurement may have seemed to be a somewhat abstracted, arcane or even irritatingly pointless exercise for most service front librarians, the prospects of the forces of globalisation impinging directly on their employment circumstances will surely increase their motivation to participate in the process. It seems fairly obvious that it is better proactively to demonstrate the value of the service 'product' that they are providing for their clients, than to have it done for them by 'outsiders' with agendas and guidelines over which librarians have no control.<sup>38</sup>

Unless the library staff is invested in the process and sees it as beneficial to their own professional practices, quality assurance may be resented for adding to an overburdened schedule; the best programs include library-wide strategic planning to head off these difficulties.<sup>39</sup>

In moving to corporate models, a change in rhetoric can be observed in the literature that points to corporate-type efforts within libraries. In the new-speak jargon, libraries become part of the 'information provision industry'.<sup>40</sup> The literature begins to speak of improving services to 'customers' or 'clients' rather than using the older terms 'students' or 'patrons', and also the need for effective, business-like practices. Indeed, the use of business-oriented jargon was seen to be offensive to librarians. When a 1998 Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs-funded best practice study was undertaken, more acceptable language was found in the 1996 IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) statement: 'performance measurement compares what a library is doing (mission) and wants to achieve (goals). Evaluation should relate to appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency'.<sup>41</sup> The research makes it clear that quality assurance is acceptable when it is accomplished without using language that equates university libraries with corporations.

## **Teaching, Learning and Information Literacy**

Another important institutional response to internationalisation is to be found in both the teaching and learning movement and the call for lifelong learning. The teaching and learning movement has grown out of the need to find new pedagogical methods that serve many and varied learning styles. For librarians, what this translates to is the need to learn new instructional methods for working directly with diverse populations in meaningful ways that support curriculum change and a flexible learning paradigm that supports student-centred lifelong learning habits.<sup>42</sup>

Librarians have traditionally conducted library tours and provided bibliographic instruction associated with specific curricula. However, new skills - both generic and specific - are needed to teach information literacy in a global society, skills that were not generally taught in library science and information programs.<sup>43</sup> As the use of new, internationally-based technologies became widespread, the skills and ability to access, evaluate and use meaningful content became ever more important. Librarians would have to take responsibility, along with teaching academics, for providing those skills;<sup>44</sup> but they had to acquire the teaching knowledge before they could teach information literacy skills.<sup>45</sup>

For Australian librarians, there was a growing recognition that a strategic response was needed to bring innovative teaching methods to their working practice. Beginning in 1992, four conferences were held at the University of South Australia to raise the issue of 'information literacy as a national, regional

and global issue'.<sup>46</sup> These meetings were fruitful and led to a CAUL-sponsored workshop open to the wider Australian and New Zealand library communities that reviewed the American College and Research Libraries' *US Information Literacy Standards for Higher Education* in order to adapt them for use in Australia. CAUL added two new standards and approved the revised document in 2000 as *Information Literacy Standards*.<sup>47</sup> While the entire document has merit, it is interesting to note that Standard Six places information literacy in a broad context that would meet the needs of a civil society. It states: 'The information literate person understands cultural, economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and accesses and uses information ethically, legally and respectfully'.<sup>48</sup>

Other strategic responses to spread information literacy as a credible library educational strategy have been institutionally, nationally and internationally based. On the institutional level, the Australian technological universities developed sound collaborative methods to provide information literacy instruction.

In the group of universities represented by IATUL (International Association of Technological University Libraries) considerable contribution has been made to the development of information skills in graduate students. IATUL has a history of developing programmes which involve raising student awareness of online searching, including teaching them to use the necessary skills.<sup>49</sup>

Such collaborative efforts have developed over the past decade to include faculty-librarian partnerships on policy issues concerning information literacy. Bruce reports:

The development of university policy is one area that is benefiting from librarian-faculty partnerships. Policy documents include such items as information literacy plans, list of graduate attributes or 'qualities of graduates,' and strategic plans such as teaching and learning plans. Librarians are working with faculty to bring the information needs of students into focus in the construction of such policy.<sup>50</sup>

On the national level ALIA established an Information Literacy Group which partnered with the National Office for the Information Economy and the National Library of Australia to gain funding for a national forum.<sup>51</sup> A collaborative effort has been built by academic librarians in Australia and New Zealand interested in mutual concerns about information literacy. This has grown into the formation of the Australian and New Zealand Institute for Information Literacy (ANZIIL).<sup>52</sup> Doskatsch makes it clear that the mission of ANZIIL will be aimed at working with national and international institutions and individuals to promote professional development of information literacy teaching.<sup>53</sup> At that time, the leadership of ANZIIL planned to offer an immersion information literacy institute patterned after a US program run by the Association of College and Research Libraries. It should be noted that this cross-fertilisation of ideas between US and southern hemisphere librarians and

their organisations is now as well-established as the practice of working with British Commonwealth partners on many issues and dates back to the mid-twentieth century.<sup>54</sup>

## Distance Education

While librarians respond to the information literacy needs of new populations, the same impulse has driven their input into distance education, which must necessarily include information literacy skills. Distance education is a well-established tradition in Australia, growing out of the demands of educating a far-flung student body spread thinly across the continent. Going from education provided by correspondence and shortwave radio to internet-based coursework has been a natural evolution. Indeed, Australia was particularly well grounded in the ability to provide distance education to overseas students around the world. Their prior experience and willingness to respond globally to institute quality assurance measures to distance education, ensures that they are a competitive global provider.<sup>55</sup>

Librarians have been a vital part of distance education from its inception. The newer forms of electronic instruction grew organically from the older methods of providing materials by mail or air.<sup>56</sup> Library literature reports in *Australian Academic & Research Libraries* have been numerous over the past twenty years in publishing efforts to understand new technologies and to employ them in ways that serve the university community on campus, in the outback and increasingly across borders wherever students partake of Australian higher education.

The growth of transnational education, the impact of trying to serve diverse international student bodies and the risks of not doing this well place great demands on librarians to provide appropriate services and resources to clients around the world.<sup>57</sup> University librarians have been in the forefront of planning and implementing new ways to instruct students in information literacy and they are especially mindful of the needs of offshore international students.<sup>58</sup> The growth of distance education has been highly successful in reaching partners in Asia where the need for postgraduate education is particularly strong.<sup>59</sup> To be successful, programming at this level is the result of a great deal of cooperative planning and collaboration across borders, of which librarians are an important part.

One must note again that, while distance provision of learning is market driven in the twenty-first century and dependent on new technologies, it is the educational intent to serve diverse clients that fuels the search for meaningful information literacy strategies. Not only have librarians had to learn new teaching methods but it has become imperative that they work closely with academics whose courses are offered through distance education.<sup>60</sup> The dynamics for librarians have changed and they must look and work outside of

the library to make flexible delivery viable. They can be successful only if they genuinely understand the cultures that they serve.<sup>61</sup>

## **Universitas 21**

One innovative and entrepreneurial international collaborative effort has brought a number of research universities together in an alliance called *Universitas 21*. Established in 1997, *Universitas 21* is a corporate network of 18 research universities spread across North America, Europe, Asia, Australia and New Zealand. The purpose of the alliance is to engage in traditional academic exchanges, international collaboration between members and entrepreneurial activities.<sup>62</sup>

While globalisation has been the driving force in formalising this new corporate configuration of universities, one of the most active arms of the alliance is that of the *Universitas 21 Library Group*. University librarians from each of the universities attend international meetings in member countries. Their agenda are designed to further both the aims of the parent organisation and those specific to libraries regarding such issues as quality assurance measures, information literacy, staff exchange for professional development and collaborative online reference and communications.<sup>63</sup> Their strategic plan describes vision, goals and strategies, which, if carried out fully, will provide an exceptionally high level of international experience for librarians from the three Australian member universities: the University of Melbourne, the University of New South Wales, and the University of Queensland.<sup>64</sup> Discussions of gaining funding from *Universitas 21* for international exchanges are in the meetings' minutes, and it is clear that the university librarians want to encourage international mobility and collaboration for their staff members.

The discussion of library literature has heretofore been confined primarily to broad institutional responses to globalisation and internationalisation. In the next part of this literature review an examination is made of the library literature that deals with individual and small group efforts to gain international experience and perspective. Such literature is somewhat sparse, perhaps in part because those who engage in international education in the broadest sense are not always the people who write about their experiences. Nevertheless, it is the drive for legitimacy and expertise, played out individually and through library departments or professional group affiliations that is the true source of successful internationalisation strategies and practices. Those who engage in these efforts enlarge their perspective in ways that lead to serving their constituents respectfully and satisfactorily.

## **International Collaboration and Professional Mobility**

In trying to understand the internationalisation process and its sources the literature review began with the journal *Australian Academic & Research Libraries (AARL)* as the premier publication reaching academic librarians. Readings from 1980 onward show that *AARL* published annual reports of IFLA

conferences and other international library conferences held in Australia and abroad. If the same few authors' names appeared on the early articles, and they frequently included a call to other librarians to participate in conference attendance, there was also a rueful admission that the costs of attendance were well out of the league of most academic librarians.<sup>65</sup> However, over the years, the numbers of university librarians attending international conferences has increased dramatically. From a handful in the early 1980s, Australian participants at international conferences now number in the hundreds each year and many contribute to the parent organisations as committee chairs and members of governance boards, as shown by the conference reports in *AARL* from 1980 to 2002. The growth of leadership on the international scene is impressive. Whether the librarians are working within the Asia-Pacific region or worldwide, there is a real effort to work cooperatively with many library partners. Perhaps because Australian librarians feel themselves to be geographically isolated, *AARL* reports from the 1990s demonstrate that there is a concerted effort to invite international speakers to conferences sponsored by ALIA, CAUL and other leading organisations.

The earliest form of international collaboration was between Australian and New Zealand librarians. Costs of attendance at conferences across the Tasman Sea are moderate and, when the first joint conference of the Library Association of Australia (LAA) and the New Zealand Library Association (NZLA) met in Christchurch in 1981, 466 Australian librarians attended.<sup>66</sup> Although it is not clear how many were academic librarians, such a large number shows a real awareness of the need for regional cooperation.

Australian librarians had already joined with Asian regional library partners in the 1970s at annual conferences sponsored by the Congress of Southeast Asian Librarians (CONSAL).<sup>67</sup> As the Australian government built cooperative political alliances with organisations such as the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), Australian librarians built professional alliances in the region.<sup>68</sup> Australia was beginning to play a leading role in developing Asian nations through the International Development Program, and librarians understood that they too could play an important role.<sup>69</sup>

In 1981 the first cataloguers' conference to discuss Chinese bibliographic issues and automation was jointly sponsored by the Australian National University (ANU), the National Library of Australia and the University of Hong Kong and was held at ANU.<sup>70</sup> Bishop's report makes it clear that this was an important occasion for librarians as it pointed to the need for better language, library and automation skills.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the occasion was the fact that this was the first time that a truly international gathering, with representatives of all the Chinese speaking areas of the world, as well as those where major research efforts in the field have been taking place, such as Japan and the United States, had met to discuss the problems of international interface of machine-readable information in the Chinese language.<sup>71</sup>

These ties to the region provided important linkages that were already long-standing, legitimate associations when the Australian government mandated international education by attracting international students, especially from Asia, in the mid to late 1980s and beyond. Librarians were well placed to take part in the discussions on international education because they had already been doing this in the regional arena and were well aware of the educational and library-specific issues facing emerging nations in Asia.

## **Collection Development**

Academic librarians working in collection development, faced with declining budgets, have developed collaborative skills that are necessary for local and regional cooperation as well as for international education. This often takes place at the departmental level of technical services. The acquisition of language collections and the ability to work with them is expensive and necessitates the addition of language specialists. In Melbourne, the librarians at the University of Melbourne, La Trobe University and Monash University formed an early agreement to cooperate in acquiring different collections that could be shared by all communities.<sup>72</sup> Librarians were generally ahead of the curve in understanding the need for solid Asian collections, however difficult it was to pay for them.<sup>73</sup>

Despite some government recognition, a 1992 survey of Asian collections underscored the need for librarians with international experience and language skills to acquire collections, catalogue the backlog of Asian language materials, and work effectively with the public.<sup>74</sup> Although some cooperative arrangements have been put in place it is still difficult to build core collections, particularly from underdeveloped regions. For instance, it is easier to get materials from Japan and South Korea than from Indonesia, Malaysia and parts of China.

The National Library of Australia is charged with collecting and disseminating foreign language materials but the high expense, coupled with the vagaries of the budget, precludes their being able to supply everything the universities could wish. However, it does occasionally send its members on buyers' trips to the islands of the Pacific to establish contacts with academics and government officials.<sup>75</sup> Acquired materials are shared with the Australian National University in Canberra, which houses the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau, a collaboration with the University of Hawaii, the Mitchell Library, the national libraries of Australia and New Zealand and the ANU Research School of Pacific Studies.<sup>76</sup>

The National Library and the Australian National University work cooperatively with the Regional Cooperation Program to assist libraries and promote resources in the Pacific region. Acquisitions are a major undertaking for the national library and important research centres whose missions require

in-depth collection development. There is little wonder that Australian academic libraries lack the resources to do on-site collection development.

Collection development has a heavy digital resources focus for all academic libraries. International collaborations between CAUL, the UK and US revolve around automated collections and raise questions of financing these necessary resources.<sup>77</sup> One can conclude that since automated databases are overwhelmingly Western in content and expensive, collection development of non-English language resources will continue to lag behind, no matter how important it is to scholars and students to find collections rich in diverse materials.<sup>78</sup>

A close look at library science and related reference materials reviewed in *AARL* from 1981 to 2001 (with six issues missing) shows some of the books deemed worthy of professional attention. By a rough count, approximately 785 books were reviewed in the issues available to this researcher, of which 251 were published in Australia and 534 overseas, primarily in the UK and the US. A further breakdown of the 785 books by categories that could be loosely deemed international or multicultural showed that, during that twenty year period, 88 books were reviewed that could help librarians in the internationalisation process. Of those 88 books on topics of international interest 30 were published in Australia and 58 abroad. This would seem to be a small number in a country where international education had been mandated by the government. A 1997 study by Maxine Rochester looked at the *Australian Library Journal* and *AARL* to see who authored research articles in Australia from 1985 to 1994.<sup>79</sup> She notes: ‘Not one of the research articles was the result of international collaboration: no Australian author was writing with someone from overseas and publishing in these two Australian journals’. This underscores the notion that the majority of professional librarians who engage in international efforts are not taking the time to write about their experiences in spite of all the evidence of international collaborative efforts.

## **Summary**

This study has explored the academic library literature to determine the pressures of globalisation and internationalisation that drive change for librarians and their professional organisations, and the institutional adaptations adopted by academic librarians to internationalise their environment. The library literature encouraged investigation of the following questions:

- What is the role of Australia’s university librarians in international education today?
- What elements of globalisation shape their institutional activities?
- What activities do librarians engage in specifically in order to internationalise their perspectives and professional working lives?

Clearly, academic librarians are taking central policy roles on issues of quality assurance and information literacy for teaching and learning purposes, while others are particularly active in providing distance education. New information on the subject might be found by examining university websites for internationalisation literature written by librarians for their own institutions or for international organisations that has not been published in *AARL* or other Australian research journals. In a further effort to understand internationalisation in Australian academic institutions a survey of university librarians was conducted to try to shed light on current conference attendance, exchanges and collaborative work, how university librarians gain international experience or perspective, and how that is applied in turn as participation in internationalising their institutions or working with overseas universities or international organisations in collaborative ventures. Part two of this study, to be published in a later issue of *AARL*, will provide the results and analysis of that survey.

### **Acknowledgement**

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### **Notes**

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